Severance Radio: A Nevada Reads Book Club
An on-air radio show launching July 5, 2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 29, 2020—Nevada—Nevada Humanities and The Beverly Rogers, Carol C. Harter Black Mountain Institute at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, are pleased to present *Severance Radio: A Nevada Reads Book Club*. The weekly radio show will air on KUNV Radio in Las Vegas, and KWNK Radio in Reno beginning July 5, 2020, for 14 weeks throughout the summer and fall and will be hosted by Heidi Kyser. *Severance* is a 2020 *[Nevada Reads](#)* book selection.

Severance Radio will air on the following Nevada radio stations on these days and times:

LAS VEGAS: Broadcasting on KUNV 91.5FM, Sundays at 7 – 8 pm, starting July 5. Stream live: http://kunv.org/live/

RENO: Broadcasting on KWNK 97.7FM, Sundays at 12 – 1 pm and Wednesdays at 6 pm, starting July 5. Stream live: https://kwnkradio.org/listen/

ANYWHERE: Stream live: http://kunv.org/live/ on Sundays at 7 - 8 pm PST or stream live https://kwnkradio.org/listen/ Sundays at 12 – 1 pm PST. Episodes will be available in podcast form on Apple Podcasts and Spotify at a later date.

Severance Radio will present chapters from the acclaimed novel *Severance*, author Ling Ma's satirical portrait of a global plague that transforms life in the U.S. Each audiobook excerpt will be followed by conversations between scholars and artists on the novel's themes, including: COVID-19; humor writing in a time of crisis; nostalgia and its dangers; freedom and loneliness; and the genre of apocalyptic writing. Featured guests will include artists, writers, and thinkers like: Kristen Arnett, Jennifer Carson, Bonnie Chau, Christopher Coake, Scott Dickensheets, Katherine Fusco, Tim Gauthier, Karen Gu, Brent Holmes, Shelley Kelly, Lisa Ko, Dana Lee, Ling Ma, Vi Khi Nao, Stephen Pasqualina, Natalie Pennington, Hugh Shapiro, Marya Shegog, Ragini Tharoor Srinivasan, Erica Vital-Lazare, Claire Vaye Watkins, Claytee White, and others.

Published in 2018, *Severance* is an eerily apt book for the current moment. While investigating capitalism through an apocalyptic lens, and offering a satirical look at worker alienation among millennials, the novel also imagines the consequences of a fictional global pandemic originating in China called "Shen Fever."

The book was selected by Nevada Humanities as the 2020 *Nevada Reads* pick. *Nevada Reads* is a statewide book club that invites Nevadans to read selected works of literature and then come together in their communities to share ideas and perceptions inspired by the books they have read. *Nevada Reads* offers avenues for discussion of topics of importance to the people of Nevada, with programming available around the state.

"An immersive project like Severance Radio, where one can take a deep-dive into one book, is a testament to our commitment to literature, storytelling, and working to understand these times of crisis," notes Christina Barr, executive director of Nevada Humanities. "At Nevada Humanities, we believe that stories help illuminate our shared experience – particularly stories of human struggle and resilience, and we are thrilled to be partnering with our good friends at Black Mountain Institute to make this happen."

"*Severance* is an uncannily prescient novel, and Nevadans will see many parallels between our moment now and the world that seemed only possible in fiction when Ling Ma imagined it a few years ago," said Joshua Wolf Shenk, executive director of the Black Mountain Institute. "I know listeners will be riveted as the book is read over radio waves and as brilliant minds from our community discuss the connections between the novel and life in the real world today. Black Mountain Institute is glad to collaborate on this venture into radio programming with long-time supporter and partner Nevada Humanities."

Severance Radio: A Nevada Reads Book Club is jointly produced by Nevada Humanities and the Black Mountain Institute, and is part of *Nevada Reads*, a statewide program of Nevada Humanities. This program is made possible with the support of: Nevada Humanities, Black Mountain Institute, Nevada State library, Archives and Public Records, The Institute of Museum and Library Services, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Nevada Center for the Book. The *Nevada Center for the Book* is a program of Nevada Humanities and is the state affiliate of the Center for the Book at the Library of Congress.

About *Severance* by Ling Ma. Picador
Candace Chen, a millennial drone self-sequestered in a Manhattan office tower, is devoted to routine. So much so, that she barely notices when a plague of biblical proportions sweeps New York. Soon entirely alone, still unfevered, Candance photographs the eerie, abandoned city as an anonymous blogger. A send-up and takedown of the rituals, routines, and missed opportunities of contemporary life, Ling Ma's *Severance* is a moving family story, a quirky coming-of-adulthood tale, and a hilarious, deadpan satire. Most important, it's a heartfelt tribute to the connections that drive us to do more than survive. *Severance* won the New York Public Library Young Lions Fiction Award, the Kirkus Prize for Fiction, and the VCU Cabell First Novelist Award. It was a *New York Times* Notable Book of 2018.

Ling Ma was born in Sanming, China, and she grew up in Utah, Nebraska, and Kansas. She attended the University of Chicago and received an MFA from Cornell University. Prior to graduate school, she worked as a journalist and an editor. Her writing has appeared in *Granta*, *VICE*, *Playboy*, *Chicago Reader*, *Ninth Letter*, and other publications. A chapter of *Severance* received the 2015 Graywolf SLS Prize. She lives in Chicago.

About Nevada Humanities, *Nevada Reads*, and *Nevada Center for the Book*:
Nevada Humanities is one of 56 independent, nonprofit state and territorial humanities councils affiliated with the National Endowment for the Humanities. With offices in Reno and Las Vegas, Nevada Humanities creates public programs and supports public projects statewide that define the Nevada experience and facilitate the exploration of issues that matter to the people of Nevada and their communities. For more information about Nevada Humanities visit nevadahumanities.org.

Nevada Reads and ***Nevada Center for the Book*** are programs of Nevada Humanities that

are made possible with support from Nevada State Library, Archives, and Public Records; the Institute of Museum and Library Services; and the National Endowment for the Humanities. The Library of Congress' *Center for the Book* promotes books and libraries, literacy and reading, and poetry and literature.

To learn more about Nevada Humanities, *Nevada Reads*, and *Nevada Center for the Book*, visit **nevadahumanities.org**. Download the ***Nevada Reads* media kit** at: nevadahumanities.org/press-room.

About Black Mountain Institute:
The Beverly Rogers, Carol C. Harter Black Mountain Institute brings writers, and the literary imagination, into the heart of public life, through live experiences, diverse fellowships and award-winning publications, including *The Believer* and the literary journal *Witness*. BMI created the first-ever U.S. City of Asylum program, hosting writers in exile from their home countries. Learn more at blackmountaininstitute.org/

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Press Materials

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